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United States Patent [19]**Pruitt et al.**[11] **Patent Number:** **6,158,201**[45] **Date of Patent:** **Dec. 12, 2000**[54] **ROTARY MOWER CONDITIONER HAVING
IMPROVED CUT CROP FLOW**[75] **Inventors:** **Martin E. Pruitt, Hesston; Kurt
Graber, Moundridge; Cecil L. Case,
Newton; Michael L. O'Halloran,
Hesston, all of Kans.**[73] **Assignee:** **Hay & Forage Industries, Hesston,
Kans.**[21] **Appl. No.:** **09/153,290**[22] **Filed:** **Sep. 15, 1998**[51] **Int. Cl.⁷** **A01D 75/30; A01D 34/44;
A01D 34/66; A01D 43/00; A01D 61/00**[52] **U.S. Cl.** **56/6; 56/13.9; 56/157;
56/16.4 R**[58] **Field of Search** **56/157, 95, 6,
56/13.5, 13.9, 16.4 R, 255, 295, 192, DIG. 1**[56] **References Cited****U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

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Primary Examiner—Thomas B. Will**Assistant Examiner**—Meredith C Petrovick**Attorney, Agent, or Firm**—Hovey, Williams, Timmons &
Collins

[57]

ABSTRACT

A mower conditioner includes a rotary style cutter bed and a pair of laterally extending crop conditioning rolls spaced rearwardly from the cutter bed. Crop flow is improved in the machine by a laterally extending conveying roller located between the cutter bed and the nip defined by the conditioning rolls. In particular, the conveying roller serves to lift cut crop up from the cutter bed and convey the crop rearwardly to the nip. This ensures that the cut crop moves in a steady stream from the cutter bed to the conditioning rolls, and thereby reduces the risk of cut crop being thrown forwardly by the cutters. A downwardly open area is preferably defined between the conveying roller and the cutter bed to provide a space through which dirt and debris can drop out of the machine. The conveying roller preferably has a rotational axis that is lower than the rotational axis of the lower conditioning roll and generally vertically aligned with the substantially planar cutting zone defined by the cutter bed.

32 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets